

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2006 - 59**

**Resolution Notifying Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of Concerns Regarding WMATA's Request for Approval of Joint Development Property Transfer and Project at the Takoma Metro Station**

**WHEREAS**, in July 2006, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ("WMATA") released a development plan for the Takoma Metro site that modified the plan submitted with its July 14, 2005 application for approval of the sale by the Federal Transit Administration ("FTA"); and

**WHEREAS**, the WMATA Board will be conducting a Compact Hearing concerning the proposed development on October 11, 2006; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Takoma Park has reviewed the Takoma Metro Station redevelopment plan carefully with its own planning staff and also retained transportation experts Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to analyze the impact of WMATA's development plan on the transit function of the Metro station; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Takoma Park also has analyzed the financial value of the projected property transfer; and

**WHEREAS**, based on the Nelson\Nygaard study, *Takoma Station Redevelopment Plan: An Analysis of Transportation Elements and the Impact on Transit Users*, dated September 2006, and the comments and analysis of numerous individuals and entities from the City of Takoma Park and the adjoining Takoma District of Columbia neighborhood, the City of Takoma Park finds that the Takoma Metro Station Redevelopment Plan should be rejected on the basis that it fails to enhance the property's transit function and will prevent the station from serving the Takoma area's long-term transit needs; and

**WHEREAS**, FTA has been monitoring the proposed sale and will review the sale after WMATA has held its Compact Hearing.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**, that the proposed development plan for the Takoma Metro Station should not be approved based on FTA criteria for approving joint development property transfers and projects for the following reasons:

1. FTA guidelines for selling and/or joint redevelopment of property used as a transit facility require that the development plan enhance the effectiveness of the transit

function. WMATA's proposal for the Takoma Metro Station detracts from the effectiveness of the transit aspects of the station; for example, by contracting the parking, bicycle and bus functions to a smaller portion of existing 6.74 acre Metro Station property, by failing to adequately provide for handicapped access to the Metro Station, by failing to provide sufficient parking for Metro users, by eliminating a necessary buffer to a neighboring multi-family residential property, and by not anticipating the long-term transit needs of the Takoma area.

2. WMATA proposes to sell approximately three-quarters of the acreage of the Takoma Metro Station property. The remaining approximately 1.9 acres to be retained by WMATA after the proposed sale and redevelopment of the rest of the property fails to meet the present and future transit needs of the Takoma area.

3. The Takoma Metro Station property was originally taken by eminent domain for transit purposes and is not to be sold without complying with FTA requirements.

4. The compensation to be received by WMATA under the Takoma Metro Station Redevelopment Plan is not fair and equitable, as WMATA's profit from this sale will not equal the fair market value of the property. Although WMATA's Joint Development Guidelines and the solicitation for this project requires the purchaser/developer to pay the cost of all modifications to the transit facility, the contract under consideration shifts those costs back to WMATA, thus offsetting any profit WMATA may realize from this proposed sale of Metro Station property.

5. The proposed Redevelopment Plan does not provide the highest and best transit use. For example, the Redevelopment Plan contemplates the construction of townhouses with attached two-car garages. It is likely that the occupants of such townhouses will use public transit less than occupants of apartments, condominiums, or other housing with one or no-car parking. WMATA's financial analysis, based on the quantitative ridership, is inaccurate because the loss of riders related to the proposed loss of existing surface parking spaces is based on the assumption that the existing spaces were used for full-day commuter parking, rather than for multiple short-term trips due to the parking time restrictions of the existing Metro Station parking lot.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND,** that in the event that FTA decides to approve the WMATA plan for property transfer and redevelopment of the Takoma Metro Station property, despite the above deficiencies, then FTA should require WMATA to amend its plan so that it meets all the following criteria:

1. WMATA must retain sufficient acreage to provide for future transit needs. The retained land should not come from the proposed Village Green or any areas already functioning for transportation purposes. One option is for WMATA to lease, rather than sell, some of the property, so that options for future transit needs will be preserved.

2. The bus pick-up and drop-off areas must be segregated from automobiles to provide reliable bus access, as required by both the Takoma Transportation Study and

Takoma Central District Plan.

3. WMATA should provide a minimum of 12 bus bays, as required by the Takoma Transportation Study, Final Report, July 2003. This is not the same as temporary layby spaces, which cannot be used as bus stops since they sit along an active driveway.

4. WMATA must better accommodate ADA needs as the current plan provides for handicapped transit users to be dropped-off substantially farther from the Metro elevator than the existing placement. One option is to extend the current tunnel to the Metro elevator in order to allow access to the Takoma Metro Station from a western entrance. (This option also was recommended by the Takoma Central District Plan, January 2002.)

5. WMATA should provide sufficient infrastructure for bicycle access, including connections to the Metropolitan Branch Trail and increase the number of bike racks/storage lockers.

6. WMATA should work with appropriate transportation agencies to optimize operating conditions of all streets intersections and prioritize providing reliable bus access to the Metro Station. Transit priority intersections or transit-only lanes or streets should be provided to compensate for any adverse impacts to bus operations from the development plan.

7. WMATA should revise the signal times at major intersections to allow adequate pedestrian crossing times.

8. WMATA should provide a pedestrian entrance to the Metro station from Cedar Street, west of the Metro underpass, or from Spring Place.

9. Kiss & Ride spaces and drop off points should be as convenient to the Metro entrance and elevator as under the current Takoma Metro Station design, where the current parking adjoins the elevator entrance.

10. Parking for housing units should be re-designed to have one space per unit with shared parking available.

11. WMATA should provide the same amount of non-commuter parking spaces as are presently available in the Takoma Metro parking lot and not substitute with street parking on interior streets of the proposed development, which will contribute to greater vehicular congestion on the site. The Takoma Transportation Plan requires the maintenance of existing parking.

12. WMATA should preserve the 50 foot green buffer between the proposed multi-family dwellings on Eastern Avenue and transit facility. (Required by the Takoma Central District Plan, January 2002.)

**THIS RESOLUTION IS ADOPTED THIS 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2006.**